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Agenda items 53 and 64 (f)

REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OBJECTIVE INFORMATION ON MILITARY MATTERS

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Peter GOOSEN (South Africa)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled:

"Reduction of military budgets:

"(a) Reduction of military budgets;

"(b) Transparency of military expenditures"

was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in accordance with its resolution 48/62 of 16 December 1993.

2. The item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session: Implementation of the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in accordance with its resolution 47/54 B of 9 December 1992.

3. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the items in its agenda and to allocate them to the First Committee.

4. At its 2nd meeting, on 13 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153. The deliberations on those items took place at the 3rd to 10th meetings, from 17 to 24 October (see A/C.1/49/PV.3-10). Structured discussions of specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach took place from 25 to 27 and on 31 October and 1 November. Consideration of draft resolutions on those items took place at the 12th to 16th meetings, on 3, 4, 7 and 9 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.12-16). Action on draft resolutions on those items took place at the 19th to 25th meetings, from 14 to 18 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.19-25).

5. In connection with items 53 and 64 (f), the First Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on reduction of military budgets: military expenditures in standardized form reported by States (A/49/190 and Add.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on transparency of military expenditures (A/49/209);

(c) Letter dated 8 August 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/49/307-S/1994/958) transmitting the text of the final statement of the twelfth session of the Interaction Council, held at Dresden, Germany, from 7 to 10 June 1994;

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters (A/49/225).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/49/L.1 AND Rev.1

6. On 24 October, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland submitted a draft resolution entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures" (A/C.1/49/L.1).

7. On 1 November, Austria, Australia, Belarus, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/49/L.1/Rev.1), which was also later sponsored by Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Haiti, the Republic of Moldova and the United States of America. The revised draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Germany at the 12th meeting, on 3 November.

8. The text of the revised draft resolution was identical to that of draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.1, with the exception of the following change: at the end of operative paragraph 2, after the words "resolution 35/142 B", the words "and utilized since then" were deleted.

9. At its 19th meeting, on 14 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.1/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 10).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

10. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 35/142 B of 12 December 1980, which introduced the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, and its resolutions 48/62 of 16 December 1993, calling upon all Member States to participate in it, and 47/54 B of 9 December 1992, endorsing the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters and inviting Member States to provide relevant information to the Secretary-General regarding their implementation,

Noting that since then national reports on military expenditures and on the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters have been submitted by a number of Member States belonging to different geographic regions,

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General for providing Member States with the reports on military expenditures in standardized form reported by States 1/ and on guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, 2/

Welcoming the decision of many Member States to exchange and to publish information annually on their military budgets and to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, as appropriate,

Reaffirming its firm conviction that a better flow of objective information on military matters can help to relieve international tension and contribute to the building of confidence among States and to the conclusion of concrete disarmament agreements,

Convinced that the end of the East-West confrontation and the resulting improvement of international relations form a sound basis for promoting further openness and transparency in all military matters,

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1/ A/49/190 and Add.1.

2/ A/49/225.

Recalling that the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters recommended certain areas for further consideration, such as the improvement of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures,

1. Recommends the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters to all Member States for implementation, fully taking into account specific political, military and other conditions prevailing in a region, on the basis of initiatives and with the agreement of the States of the region concerned;

2. Calls upon all Member States to report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, using, for the time being, the reporting instrument as recommended in its resolution 35/142 B;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to circulate annually the reports on military expenditures, as received from Member States;

4. Also requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on ways and means to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, including, in particular, how to strengthen and broaden participation in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, and to submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session;

5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session the item entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures".